

# Experts urge ECOWAS to apply automaticity in monitoring political, economic indices

Experts say the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), must apply automaticity for monitoring economic and political indices in the sub-region. They also call for diplomacy and negotiations and putting pressure in ensuring that military step down in the Sub-region. This was the positions of Prof. Raymond Atugba, Dean, University of Ghana, and Mohamed Ibn Chambas, former President of the ECOWAS Commission, at a 3-day high level Parliamentary Seminar on "The Challenges of Unconstitutional Regime Change And Presidential Term Limits In West Africa - Role Of The ECOWAS Parliament, in Winneba, Ghana.

Presenting his paper on the topic under review, Prof. Atugba said political and economic indices must be monitored to give early warning signals for preemptive action. He stated: "ECOWAS has established all of its countries automatic mechanisms for getting money from the countries, it is now with automaticity and the countries can't collect those port duties and spend it. Why are we not applying that automaticity to the monitoring of economic criteria for each criterion? Because we show that we can institute automaticity when it comes to our market. Why can't we do that for monitoring economic and political indices that can give early warning signals for you to take preemptive action.

"History has taught us that it has happened, in the 1960s we saw the political Kingdom the people waited until 1970s no economic Kingdom came. What happened? Coups in the 1970s, in the 1980s, in the 1990s they forgave us and said come back. So, we went back to the political sector in the 1990s, from the year 2000 they waited 10 years no economic Kingdom. So, what have they started doing? Kicking you out. It is not rocket science, if the economic Kingdom doesn't follow the political Kingdom. Forget it! You will be kicked out as politicians".

He therefore advised political actors who seek political positions through elections to ensure that the economic wellbeing of the citizens is attended to when elected, otherwise they will be "kicked out through a coup". "So my first point of action for the ECOWAS States, let the economic Kingdom follow the political Kingdom otherwise there will be military coups and in the absent of military coups there will be civilian uprising as have happened in Gambia, Mali, Guinea, Burkina Faso, Niger contributing to political constitutional changes in government. "What we are doing in Africa is that we are seeking the political Kingdom and after that we stop there. People vote to the ballot box to vote for you not because they want to end at the political Kingdom, they see you as a means to reach the economic Kingdom, if you don't



take them to the economic Kingdom, they will kick you out either through a military coups or a civilian coup. It is as simple as that. "And it is not so difficult to do to bring about the economic Kingdom, there are basic criteria that determine whether a country is going in the right way or not. If you check the country's GDP, minimum wage, inflation, interest rate, exchange rate, prices of natural resources, military spending and a few other indices, you will know whether the country is leading to trouble or not. Why can't ECOWAS monitor this and take preemptive actions in countries that are so way off the economic Kingdom that they are about to plunge politically. For God's sake you are called the economic community of west African States not a political community of west African States

Mohamed Ibn Chambas, former President of the ECOWAS Commission, called for diplomacy and negotiations in dealing with military takeovers in the sub-region. He also wants African solutions to African problems, even as he said ECOWAS must be allowed to be in the driver's seat. "I think after the dust is settled, we need to ensure that inform decisions and actions are taken coups can never be condoned, should not be allowed, military should not be made to feel comfortable, we must constantly put pressure on them. But ultimately in the context at that diplomacy and negotiation that should prevail. We have in Africa strife, in Sahel we have strife in the sub-region, we cannot escalate it militarily. "We must allow diplomacy to prevail and we must allow ECOWAS to truly be in the driver's seat so that we seek African solutions to this African problem, so our madness sometimes they should allow us to get a little space to breathe and think clearly about the solutions and only then can they come in to support to ensure that we are on the right path to consolidating democratic governance in the continent", Chambas asserted. As discussions and deliberation continues causes of coups in the region, solutions are also proffered by various speakers.